

## THE HOLLOW WILLOW.



I WELL remember, when young, that in a certain field there stood an old willow tree, from which boys used to get their touch-wood; but, although the trunk was much hollowed away, there were many flourishing shoots on the top.

This tree strongly reminds me of some boys and girls who have a tolerable share of knowledge in their heads, respecting Bible truths, but have no love to God in their hearts. Now, I beg you not to forget the importance of having love in the heart, as well as knowledge

in the head: for it is not enough that Divine truths should reach your heads, they should affect your hearts; that is, you should love them. Those who love God most will fear sin most, and thus escape that misery which is connected with sin. As we are all born with love to sin in our hearts, we do well to remember that the love of God can drive sin out, and keep it out.

There was once a certain man, who had two servants whom he equally favoured, and kindly treated; but one loved him, and the other hated him. Both discharged certain duties required of them; but which servant, think you, was most esteemed by his master? You will readily reply, The one who, loving him, served him from love. Then, my dear children, recollect that God has shown His love to you, by giving you health, and food, and friends; and, above all, by offering to pardon all your sins through Jesus Christ, and to make you holy and fit for heaven. And let me assure you that if you accept His kind invitation, if you are enabled to love Him from your hearts, if you are

daily striving to please Him in all you do and say, and if you are delighting in His blessed service, you may rejoice in the prospect of one day joining the company of glorified saints and holy angels, who are happy in the presence and love of God in the heavenly world.

If the owner of the hollow tree had called a timber merchant to view it, and had desired him to purchase it, no doubt he would soon have exclaimed, "Your tree is useless to me; it is true, there is plenty of top; but it is rotten at heart, it is only fit for the fire." Just so will it be at the last with those who are destitute of love to God in their hearts: instead of being made pillars in the temple of the Lord, to go no more out for ever, they will be consigned to that fire which will never be quenched.

Sinners should tremble as they look forward to that period when "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God," and when He shall summon all to appear before His dread tribunal. Ah! my dear readers, we cannot expect it will then be asked,

What has been seen and known? but, What has been felt and done? Let these important inquiries be now proposed. Ask yourselves what you feel. Do you feel you are sinners, that you have broken the holy laws of God, that you therefore deserve to endure His wrath through eternity? Do you perceive the wonderful love of God in sending His dear Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life? Oh then, come to Jesus! come to Jesus by faith, with humble and earnest prayer. He is exalted on His throne to give repentance and remission of sins. He will receive you graciously, and love you freely.

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